

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: COUNTY FACILITIES

DATE: DECEMBER 13, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Haskell
O'Connor
F. Thomas
Champagne
VanNess

Committee Members Absent:

Supervisors Geraghty
Girard

Others Present:

Frank Morehouse, Superintendent of Buildings
William Lamy, Superintendent, Dept. of Public
Works
William Thomas, Chairman
Joan Parsons, Commissioner of Administrative &
Fiscal Services
Joan Sady, Clerk
Paul Dusek, County Attorney
Supervisor Caimano
Supervisor Belden
Supervisor Sheehan
Supervisor Sokol
Supervisor Tessier
Supervisor Mason
Supervisor Kenny
Supervisor Gabriels
Supervisor Stec
Jon Norris, Clark Patterson Associates
John Horgan, Bovis Lend Lease LMB, Inc.
Frank O'Keefe, County Treasurer
See Sign-In Sheet for additional guests
Madeline Farbman, *The Post-Star*
David Cederstrom, *The Chronicle*
Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist

Mr. Haskell called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Frank Morehouse, Superintendent of Buildings, distributed an Agenda packet to each of the Committee members and a copy is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Haskell explained the special Committee meeting had been convened in order to discuss the proposed Health and Human Services Building. He apprized that the Core Team had met the day before to review the proposal. He further reported that local developer had also attended the meeting and presented a new option that he would expound on, later, after Agenda review was complete.

Mr. Haskell introduced the various parties in attendance at today's meeting: the architect, Jon Norris of Clark Patterson Associates; construction manager, John Horgan of Bovis Lend Lease LMD, Inc.; and Fred Austin, Building Project Coordinator, and an Intern from the Fort William Henry Resort.

Mr. Haskell reported the SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review) approval and bond vote were not scheduled for today's meeting, since the SEQR's archeological report was not due until December 20, 2006.

Mr. Haskell pointed out that the current Department of Social Services (DSS) Building had been renovated approximately 10 years ago with an estimated life-span of 15 years.

He briefly reviewed the building's condition and noted the third floor had not been structurally safe for a year or two; the basement/lower level was no longer useable; and the carpeting (on the remaining two floors) was coming up due to the floor's deterioration beneath the carpet. Most recently, he said, the elevator company had advised the County the elevators were "single walled" and if the single wall failed, it would cause a sharp descent. Therefore, he said, the elevator company would no longer service the equipment.

Continuing, Mr. Haskell observed that the County had built a co-generation facility with the capacity to run both the Westmount Health Facility and the existing Department of Social Services Building. He acknowledged the co-gen would be capable of providing some of the heat needed for a new structure, although not all of the needs.

Given the condition of the existing building, Mr. Haskell declared it was his opinion, the DSS would need to be relocated, one way or the other, to either a new building or rented office space. He reiterated the horrible condition of the building and referred to the building tour that some of the Supervisors had participated in, earlier in the year.

Next, Mr. Haskell invited the architect, Jon Norris, of Clark Patterson Associates, to review the project history for the benefit of all in attendance.

Mr. Gabriels entered the meeting at 9:34 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Norris who briefly reviewed the project history with regards to how the Committee had appointed a Core Team to develop the necessary components of the new building. He explained the Core Team was comprised of the Committee Chairman, John Haskell; Building Superintendent, Frank Morehouse; Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services, Joan Parsons; Building Project Coordinator, Fred Austin; the Construction Manager, Bovis Lend Lease LMB, Inc.; and the Architects, Clark Patterson Associates.

Mr. Norris observed that any architectural project would begin with a *schematic phase* which had been completed and a report had been submitted to the Core Team. From there, he noted the project entered the *design development phase*, due for completion by the end of December. This phase, he said, included design of the mechanical system, ceiling plans, outline specifications and all things connected to pre-construction documentation preparation. If the Committee decided to move forward, he noted, the

next phase of *construction document preparation* could start as soon as January 2007 and could be completed by the end of March 2007.

Mr. Norris expounded on the work of the Core Team, which included bi-monthly meetings, meetings with Department Heads on the stratification of the building to determine what departments needed to be adjacent to what building features. He pointed out that a portion of the building would be rented out to the New York State Department of Labor, Council for Prevention, YAP (Youth Advocacy Program) and other Departments that would function as tenants, as well.

Messrs. O'Keefe and Stec entered the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

Continuing, Mr. Norris said, preliminary work had also been done regarding the site utilities such as sewer, water pressure, internal sprinkler system (for fire deterrent), and heat and electricity via the co-gen plant. He stated that Bovis Lend Lease, LMB, the Construction Manager, was providing pre-construction services regarding site preparation and soil analysis with geo technical investigation and hazard investigation of lead, asbestos, etc.

Mr. Cleveland exited the meeting at 9:41 a.m.

Mr. Norris referred to various charts which illustrated the floor plans and site plans of the project (see copies on file with the minutes). He explained the building would be three stories, with one single point of entry, located on the first floor, where all guests would be screened via a magnetometer. He noted the entrance and security features of the building had been developed with the assistance of Sheriff Cleveland. He said, the location of offices had been determined by the needs of the clients with the various departments. Specifically, he said, the Office for the Aging was near the front entrance and would not require the use of stairs or elevators. In compliance with a new State program that called for a Point of Entry (POE), he said, two divisions within Social Services would also be adjacent to the front entrance.

For convenience of the County's Public Health Nursing staff, Mr. Norris observed, their offices were also near to the entrance due to the volume of materials they needed to transport on a daily basis.

Responding to questions from Mr. Champagne, Mr. Norris estimated the building would have 150 to 200 occupants, who would all have employee identification badges for entrance into the building. He said the Que space for the magnetometer area also included lockers and a vestibule area.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Norris said he would review the depth of the Que space with the Sheriff to verify adequate space had been provided.

Mrs. Parsons entered the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

Mr. Norris pointed out that each of the three floors had a general public area which was separated from the staff office areas, to maintain security throughout the building. He noted the building site was located on a grade, which brought the front of the second floor to ground level, and allowed for a receiving area at that level.

Mr. Norris briefly reviewed the site chart that illustrated the existing buildings and the proposed parking areas and new construction. (A copy is on file with the minutes.)

He noted the current WIC building would be retained for use by other County Departments. In addition, he said, the site locations were selected to accommodate existing wetlands and streams and their respective boundaries.

Mr. Norris explained the Core Team had reviewed a number of alternate sites for the new building. During that process, he said, a number of key components had to be evaluated, which included the following:

- ✓ age of proposed buildings with regards to Building Code improvements related to a "change of use";
- ✓ mechanicals of an existing building, such as electric capacity;
- ✓ water and/or steam lines often times have insulation (asbestos) that could create a hazard;
- ✓ BAT tile flooring that may have had carpeting installed over it - could become an abatement project if it was removed;
- ✓ Boilers may have attachments, joints with corrosion, etc.; and
- ✓ purchase costs for the new site and/or existing building.

Mr. Norris explained the building codes would allow an existing mechanical structure to remain in a building, but once the equipment needed to be repaired, the repairs would have to meet the new code requirements. Therefore, if the County were to make any structural changes to an existing building, and the mechanical systems were "tampered with" or corroded equipment needed to be replaced, abatement issues were likely to develop which could be quite expensive. He also pointed out that even "temporary accommodations" would need to be "up to code" for fire code safety concerns.

Mr. Norris commented the Core Team's strategy for expansion had been directly linked to the space occupied by the tenants of the Building. He said he had worked on projects with other clients, where the building's columns, elevators and roof structure were built in anticipation of future floors to be added. Those types of accommodations, he noted, would also drive up the initial cost of the building.

Mr. Caimano reminded the Committee that the height of the building may need to comply with the Town of Queensbury's zoning regulations. However, Mr. Dusek pointed out, the County was not subject to the Town's zoning ordinances.

Mr. Champagne observed that at least part of the first floor of the building would be "underground" with no windows. Mr. Haskell concurred and he explained the east wing

of the building would be without windows in the office areas. He said the design had been discussed with the Departments and it was determined the office spaces would be assigned to the traveling nurses since they spent very little time actually in the office.

Daniel Stec, Supervisor for the Town of Queensbury, asked how far the nearest neighbors were to the proposed structure and what the external appearance of the building was.

In response, Mr. Norris noted, the building had a flat, membrane roof, steel frame with metal deck, and a brick exterior with a metal insulated panel on the upper floor. He also referred to an artists rendering of the proposed building (displayed on an easel for viewing– no handouts were distributed). He said the intention was to mimic the Westmount Health Facility's exterior, as closely as possible, to lend to a campus feeling.

Mr. Norris acknowledged the exact measurements to the nearest neighbor were not immediately available, although he would be glad to report back to Mr. Stec with the information. He pointed out there was a lot of vacant land between the building and the Northway, and the property near the Town's recreational center was left untouched.

Mr. Stec concurred with Mr. Dusek's earlier comment that the County was not subject to the Town's zoning ordinances. However, he said, he would like the Town's residents to have the opportunity for public comment since he anticipated questions related to traffic flow, light pollution, storm water, noise, etc. He suggested that if the County presented the "A game" set of plans for the public to review, he felt it would lend credibility to the Town Planning Board's requests of the public, in the future.

Mr. Haskell thanked Mr. Stec for his suggestions and noted the County would comply within reason, as related to the cost containment, etc.

A brief discussion ensued.

Privilege of the floor was extended to John Horgan, of Bovis Lend Lease LMB, Inc., who explained his firm had been hired as the construction manager for the project. Mr. Horgan distributed a Schematic Budget to all in attendance and a copy is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Horgan noted the construction would take approximately 18 months to complete and he was currently working out the site logistics. Once the new structure was built, he said, the offices would be moved over and the old building demolished, then the parking lot could be completed. He further stated, at the completion of the Design & Development phase, a new budget would be compiled before the construction documents were developed. From there, he noted, the budget would be re-evaluated to reflect the status at each stage along the way.

Mr. Horgan reiterated earlier comments that the bid documents should be ready by April or May of 2007.

Mr. Champagne suggested that perhaps the County should consider moving the Department of Social Services to rented office space while the construction was underway. That way, he said, the old building could be demolished which may ease the construction process.

Mr. Horgan acknowledged there may be some advantages to Mr. Champagne's suggestion. However, he pointed out there were expenses involved with the move to and from the rented office space, which may offset the other benefits.

General discussion ensued.

Mr. Horgan directed attention to the Schematic Budget handout and he explained the Health & Human Services (HHS) building was 98,466 square feet, at an estimated cost of \$16,587,878. He pointed out the costs to connect to the Town of Queensbury Sewer System were \$486,000; the Fiber Optic connections were \$200,000; the site utilities were \$200,000 and the Social Services Building's abatement was \$200,000. In addition, he noted, even though a portion of the building was still below ground level, it had been elevated to the current depth, as a cost saving measure of \$838,666.

Mr. Horgan further noted the Estimate Contingency and Design/Trade Contingency figures were included in the event that design features changed or materials went up in cost. He cautioned that construction costs were predicted to rise sharply over the next year or two, by as much as 9%. Therefore, he said, the hard costs of the finished project could be as high as \$24,383,364.

Mr. Horgan explained the "Owners' Soft Costs of 23%" or \$5,221,094, actually included the costs related to the construction manager, architectural, insurance, legal, builder's risk costs and FFE (furniture, fixtures and equipment), consultants, etc.

Nick Caimano, as Budget Officer, questioned why the Soft Costs had been estimated at 23%. Mr. Champagne commented that perhaps the FFE costs could be reduced somewhat, as well. Mr. Norris acknowledged that the FFE Budget still needed to be reviewed by the County.

Returning to Agenda review at Item 10, Mr. Haskell reported the County Treasurer had obtained quotations for a 20-year, 25-year, or 30-year bond. For a \$30 million bond for 30 years, he said, the annual payment of \$1.8 million would be offset by State funds received for "maintenance in lieu of rent" in the amount of \$540,000. Therefore, he said, a draft E&A Table (Equalization and Assessment Table) was prepared, based upon the net \$1.3 million to be raised by taxes. (Mrs. Parsons distributed the draft E&A Table to all in attendance and a copy is on file with the minutes.) Mr. Haskell observed that the far left column illustrated the net impact on taxes for each of the

County's municipalities.

Mr. Haskell reported that a local developer had recently contacted him with a new alternative to the proposed HHS building. He further explained the developer had met with the Core Team, just yesterday, to present his ideas, although no cost figures were yet available.

Mr. Haskell said he wanted to keep an open mind and consider any and all alternatives before making the final decision. However, he expressed his concerns that this new alternative did not yet have dollar figures attached; the savings from the co-gen plant would be forfeited, if built elsewhere; and the State's money for "maintenance in lieu of rent" would go to the landlord, not the County.

Mr. O'Connor pointed out that at least one of the tenants in the proposed HHS building had wanted to be close to the Northway. Mr. Caimano stated that if the County were to purchase this property at the end of the lease, it would mean another property removed from the tax rolls.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Haskell acknowledged that if the Committee wanted to explore this new alternative, the details would not be available in time for the December 15th Board meeting.

Mr. Wm. Thomas questioned whether or not a special meeting would need to be scheduled. Mr. Dusek explained the public comment and SEQR results would not be completed until December 20th. He suggested that documents could be ready no sooner than December 22nd, or perhaps after the 25th of December.

Mr. Haskell acknowledged that he would prefer the 22nd, if at all possible. Mr. Wm. Thomas, as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, declared a special Board meeting would be scheduled for December 22nd, pending the results of the SEQR process.

Mr. Haskell said he was concerned that the developer may be compiling figures based upon a building that would not include all of the fiber optics and security features the County would need, as well as the FFE budget.

Mr. Wm. Thomas reminded the Committee that if the County intended to bond the project, a resolution needed to be passed before the end of this year, or a full year would be lost before the project could move forward. He also noted a bond would not be necessary, if the County decided to let the developer build the project and then lease the office space.

A general discussion ensued.

In response to questions from Mr. Caimano, Mr. Haskell explained the Committee had been working on the proposed building for a number of years, to bring the project this far. He declared that the Committee was not attempting to rush any particular phase

of this project. He said the project just happened to be at this juncture at this particular point on the calendar. He commented that every project comes to the point where a decision has to be made and this one just happened to coincide with the end of the year.

Mr. VanNess agreed with Mr. Haskell's comments and he said he questioned why the developer had waited until the 11th hour to come forward with this proposal. He said, he would prefer to see the County in charge of its own destiny, and not in the hands of a landlord.

General discussion ensued.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Fred Austin, Building Project Coordinator, who said he felt that "delay would be the most vicious form of denial, in terms of expense, that there was." He pointed out the new computer chip plant moving to Saratoga County was expected to send the building industry skyrocketing. In addition, he noted, the design of the HHS building had been done, not by the architect, but through the process of working with the Departments involved.

Responding to comments from various Supervisors, Mr. Haskell explained that he felt an obligation, as Chairman of the County Facilities Committee, to explore all possibilities and then report back to the Committee members. He acknowledged that if the Committee were to thoroughly review the developer's concept, it would mean a tremendous amount of work for the County Attorney and Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services.

At the close of a brief discussion, Mr. Haskell asked each of the Committee members if they wanted to pursue the developer's proposal, or move forward with the proposed HHS building. He polled the Committee members in attendance and Messrs. O'Connor, F. Thomas, Champagne and VanNess all voted to proceed with the HHS building.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. O'Connor and seconded by Mr. Champagne, Mr. Haskell adjourned the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist